

Slack, S. B.

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Testimonials

IN FAVOUR OF

S. B. SLACK, M.A.

FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD,

*Candidate for the Professorship of Latin at
University College, Toronto.*

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*Candidate for the Professorship of Latin at
University College, Toronto.*

From S. H. BUTCHER, LITT.D., LL.D., Professor of Greek in the University of Edinburgh; formerly Fellow of University College, Oxford, and of Trinity College, Cambridge.

July 14, 1895.

MR. S. B. SLACK informs me that he is standing for the Professorship of Latin at University College, Toronto. I have a high opinion of Mr. SLACK's classical scholarship. In 1879 I was an Examiner for Classical Honour Moderations at Oxford, when he obtained a First Class. His work then impressed me as exhibiting unusual mastery over Greek and Latin, and a fine faculty of composing in both languages. In 1892 I had occasion to need the assistance of a man on whose scholarship I could rely in the correction of Greek prose compositions in Edinburgh University. I was fortunate enough to secure Mr. SLACK's services, and I cannot speak too highly of the taste, the care and the thoroughness with which he has done the work.

Mr. SLACK has in recent years paid special attention also to the philological side of classical learning. He seems to me to be equipped both with the erudition and enthusiasm which go to make a good Professor.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD,
July 14, 1895.

I HAVE known Mr. SLACK for many years, ever since October, 1877, when he was elected to the Second Scholarship at Balliol, defeating easily a large number of men, who have since obtained Fellowships at Oxford. As I was one of those who, on that occasion, were found to be inferior to him, I feel that I am put in a somewhat delicate position in being asked to testify to his abilities.

Mr. SLACK was well known to his contemporaries as being the possessor of extraordinary fluency in verse, as well as in prose composition. We looked upon him as a natural scholar, gifted with peculiar insight into the ancient languages. It was a great grief to many of his friends that, after he came into residence, his health gave way, and so he was not able to do full justice to his abilities; I say full justice, since, although he obtained a brilliant First Class in Moderations, and distinguished himself in the examination for the Craven Scholarships, yet more than this was at one time expected of him.

Mr. SLACK is a man with an original and independent mind, who thinks for himself, and whose opinions would always be valuable.

He is a thorough student who, since taking his Degree, has gone on accumulating knowledge, and may with justice be described as a 'deeply-read' man. He has made a special study of Greek and Latin philology, while his interest in language may be judged from the fact that he has also worked with success at Anglo-Saxon, Old Irish, and Russian. His lucidity in conversation would lead me to suppose that as a teacher he would be clear and inspiring. I trust that so learned a man may meet with his reward.

ALBERT C. CLARK, M.A.,
Fellow and Tutor of Queen's College, Oxford.

To the Council of University College, Toronto.

THE MILITARY COLLEGE, OXFORD,
July 18, 1895.

GENTLEMEN,

I am informed by Mr. SLACK, who is at present Senior Classical Master at this College, that it is his intention to offer himself as a candidate for the Professorship of Latin at University College, Toronto. For such a post Mr. SLACK's abilities peculiarly fit him. He is one of the best pure scholars I have ever met. The distinctions which he won at the University are sufficient guarantee of his abilities in this respect, but I happen to know further on the best authority, that he was the best candidate of his year in the Honour School of Classical Moderations, i.e. the best scholar of his year.

It is a matter of notoriety that many men who take high degrees become torpid in intellectual interest after so doing, lose the habit of regular reading, and consequently fall back in scholarship. With Mr. SLACK this has eminently not been the case. He is now as keen a student as ever, and I think that the course which his studies have taken, that of the Science of Classical Philology, is one peculiarly fitted to render him an exceptionally capable and inspiring Professor of Classics in any University. I have always felt that much of Mr. SLACK's learning is thrown away on a class of young boys. To a man with a man's brain he would be able to give a fuller benefit from his powers and knowledge, while his experience of school teaching would enable him to understand and explain away the difficulties of the less advanced among his pupils.

To give a practical example of what Mr. SLACK is capable of doing with his pupils, I may mention that in the November Examination for entrance into Woolwich and Sandhurst, such boys as were under his tuition made enormous strides in the matter of marks over those which they had obtained in the previous summer. The advance in several cases amounted to from fifty to eighty per cent. Mr. SLACK is very keen about his work here, and is ready to give willing pupils a very large amount of help outside the ordinary course of instruction.

His character is quite unexceptional, and I have found him a pleasant colleague.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

G. BEARDOE GRUNDY, M.A.,

Brasenose College, Oxon ;

Head Master of the Oxford Military College.

WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD,
August 25, 1882.

I WAS one of Mr. S. B. SLACK's Examiners in Moderations (Honours in Classics) in Michaelmas Term, 1879, and I remember the impression that his work then made upon us. Among a number of good men in the First Class, some two or three seemed to me markedly the best, and of these Mr. SLACK was one. His compositions and his work generally showed scholarship and ability of a high order.

T. W. JACKSON,
Fellow and Tutor of Worcester College.

Additional from Mr. SENIOR.

March 24, 1890.

IN the Testimonial which I wrote for Mr. SLACK in 1888, I mentioned only those points which had special reference to the post (Professor of Latin) which he then sought. I may add, however, that his work here has by no means been confined to Classics. He has also taught Mathematics, German and English subjects, with striking success, and he is well able to teach the other subjects—French, &c.—of a general school education. Indeed his general, in addition to his special, qualifications peculiarly fit him for a Head Mastership, enabling him from personal knowledge of the various branches of the school curriculum both to undertake any of those branches himself and also to efficiently supervise and regulate the work of his colleagues. The following record (in addition to that previously given) of his work here since 1888 speaks for itself. His pupils have gained the following successes:—Senior Scholarship (£80) at Wadham College, Oxford; Earnshaw Scholarship at Firth College; First Class Honours in Latin at the London Intermediate Exam. in Arts; final B.A. (direct from School) of the London University and the Oxford and Cambridge Commercial Certificate¹. Also every boy sent from this School to the recent public examinations—the College of Preceptors, the Cambridge Locals (including First Class Honours, with distinction in Latin for a boy two years under the required age), and the London Matriculation—was successful, and Mr. SLACK was largely instrumental in bringing about this result.

It is unnecessary for me to add to what I have already said of his powers of organisation, discipline, and hard work. His experience here for nearly six years, in dealing with a wide range of character, is invaluable, and for his sake and that of the School which secures his services, I should rejoice to hear of his appointment to a Head Mastership in which he would find full scope for his undoubted abilities.

EDWARD SENIOR,

Head Master of Sheffield Grammar School.

¹ Also three Scholarships at Cavendish College, Cambridge, and Scholarship of £80 at Marlborough College.—S. B. S.

*From the REV. E. SENIOR, M.A., Head Master of Sheffield
Grammar School.*

August, 1888.

MR. S. B. SLACK informs me that he is a Candidate for the Professorship of Latin at the University College, Cardiff. It gives me great pleasure to testify to his fitness for the post. Mr. SLACK has been my colleague as Second Master here from the time of my appointment as Head Master in 1884. His degree and testimonials from College bear ample testimony to his ability and scholarship, and a simple record of his work here will suffice to show that he has powers of a very high order as a teacher. When he joined the staff of this school the standard of education was very low. In Latin the highest class had only been once through the first twenty-five chapters of the first Book of Cæsar's 'De Bell. Gall.' In the year succeeding this, four of his pupils gained distinction in Latin in the Cambridge Local Examinations, and throughout his course here similar success has attended his branch of the work, the reports of the examiners being uniformly favourable. In the London Matriculation Examination last January, one of his pupils was the first of those who passed direct from any school or college, and was awarded an exhibition. I enclose a list of the work offered for the school examination at the end of last term¹, which will show the progress which his energy has brought about in the classical work of the school. He is an excellent disciplinarian, and in ability to grapple with difficulties of organisation and the details of the work of a large school, I have not seen his equal. His health has been uniformly good, and his fidelity to his duties is evinced by the fact that for four years he has not been absent from his work for a single day.

I may add that his moral character is of the highest, that he is a gentleman of wide reading and acquirements, and that he has kept himself abreast of the developments and needs of modern educational life. I understand that, from a pecuniary point of view, he would lose rather than gain by the change which he seeks, and that he offers himself for the Professorship at Cardiff as being more congenial to his habits and aims. I have no doubt that he would ensure the same success which has attended his efforts here, and that he would prove a valuable addition to the staff of the University College of South Wales.

¹ Upper Sixth Form : Juv. Satt. xiii. ; Tac. Ann. xi. xii, xiii. ; Cic. pro Plancio ; Plautus, Menaechmi ; Horace, Ode I. ; Hom. Od. xxi-xxiii. ; Soph. Ajax, Trach. ; Thuc. iv. ; Comp. ; Rom. History. Lower Sixth : Virg. Aen. ii-iii. ; Livy vi.

*From the late REV. B. JOWETT, Master of Balliol College, and
Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford.*

August 10, 1888.

MR. S. B. SLACK is a very sound and good scholar. He was elected to an open Scholarship at Balliol about ten years ago, and obtained what I was informed at the time, was the best First Class in Moderations among those who were in his class list. His want of success in the Final Schools I attribute mainly to temporary illness. If appointed to a Classical Professorship at the University College of South Wales, I believe that he would work hard and do well. His character and conduct while at Balliol were very satisfactory. He is a man of superior abilities, and possesses great powers of acquiring knowledge.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LIVERPOOL,
August 17, 1888.

FROM intimacy with Mr. SLACK at Balliol, and from experience of a University College, I have much pleasure in expressing my opinion of his strong claims to a Latin chair. At Oxford he was one of the best classical scholars of his time. Since then he has, I believe, proved himself an excellent teacher, thorough and inspiring. To these main qualifications I would merely add, that during the period at Balliol when his health prevented him from studying hard for the Final Schools he read the great writers, and gained, one would say, greatly in literary culture. I am of opinion that there was in this much to compensate for his missing the full benefit of the Greats Schools. He was already, as his tutors and examiners have remarked, a good scholar beyond his years; too exclusively he thought himself he had worked before in linguistic scholarship. How much his scholarship has been enriched and his teaching vivified, is witnessed to now by the Head Master, with whom he taught. For a University College chair such union of literary culture and exact scholarship cannot, I think, be over-estimated. Connected with this, and important for the development of a young college, his ideas on education are, I believe, sound and liberal. He would be, I am sure, a pleasant and loyal colleague, a wise friend to his pupils, and would not spare himself in work. For all sterling qualities as scholar and man he could be relied on.

J. M. MACKAY, M.A.,
*Professor of Modern History at University
 College, Liverpool.*

From P. E. MATHESON, ESQ., M.A., Fellow and Tutor of New College; Secretary of the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board.

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD,
December 12, 1893.

I HAVE known Mr. S. B. SLACK since he came up as a Classical Scholar to Balliol in the year 1878. He then showed a great interest in classical literature, and an acute and scholarly mind. I believe that since he took his degree he has not only had valuable experience in teaching, but has pursued his classical studies both on the literary and philological side, and that he is therefore well equipped for the work of a lecturer in Latin and Greek. He is a particularly good scholar, and those who know his teaching speak very highly of his patience and attention to his pupils. He has examined a number of Candidates' papers in Latin for the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board, and has done this work with great care and punctuality. He is a man prepared to work hard, and has a high sense of the duty of a teacher to his pupils. I believe that he would conscientiously devote himself to the work of any post to which he may be appointed.

*From F. DE PARAVICINI, ESQ., M.A., Fellow and Tutor of
Balliol College, Oxford.*

BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD,
June 18, 1884.

I WELL remember the distinct impression of power and ability which Mr. SLACK's work in his examination for the Balliol Scholarships left on my mind. He struck me as being in many points much older and more mature than his competitors, and as having already attained a level which it might take others a long time to reach. In his examination in Honour Moderations (Classics) he was one of the two or three at the top of the First Class: in the examination for the Prosser Exhibition at Balliol (in which History and Philosophy play an equal part with Classics, and which generally goes to the best man of the year) he was placed first equal.

He is strong in scholarship and strong also in general understanding and intelligence; and I am told that he has been successful both in teaching and in managing a class. He ought to make an excellent master for a Sixth Form.

July 19, 1895.

Mr. S. B. SLACK was a Scholar of Balliol College, and bore a good character at the College during the whole of his undergraduate time. He is an excellent Latin and Greek scholar, and, in my opinion, a man of considerable ability. A period of ill-health, from which I am glad to hear he is now restored, prevented his carrying on to the end the success which attended the early part of his Oxford career. As a teacher of the Classics, I believe that he will hold up to his pupils a high standard of excellence both in translation and composition, and that he will be earnest and conscientious in the discharge of Professorial duties.

J. L. STRACHAN-DAVIDSON,

Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College.

OXFORD,
July 20, 1895.

HAVING heard that Mr. S. B. SLACK, late scholar of Balliol College, is a candidate for the Professorship of the Latin Language and Literature at University College, Toronto, I venture to say a few words in support of his candidature.

I consider Mr. SLACK pre-eminently qualified and fitted in every way to discharge the important duties of the post to which he aspires. It would, in my opinion, be difficult to find another man who possesses a more profound and comprehensive knowledge of the subject in all its phases.

But Mr. SLACK is not only a learned scholar, he is also a most successful teacher, and has had much experience in preparing pupils for the various University Examinations. Should he be appointed to the post, the College would have to be congratulated on having gained a thorough scholar and an excellent teacher.

JOSEPH WRIGHT, M.A., PH.D.,

*Deputy Professor of Comparative Philology in the
University of Oxford.*

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S.B. Slack Strassburg i/E
Ruprechtsauer Allee 28
act 0 Germany
Dec 20, 1895

The President, Johns Hopkins Univ.

Sir,

I am anxious to obtain a position
as Professor or Lecturer in an American
University and I venture therefore
to ask permission to lay before you
a short statement of my qualifications
in case a vacancy should
occur at your university.

I was educated at Liverpool College
and at Balliol College, Oxford, where I
obtained an open classical scholarship,
the highest honour a schoolboy can
obtain in England. I was placed
in the 1st class in classical modern
tions: the order of merit in each
class is not published but I
was informed that I stood first
in the first class. Classical
mods. I may observe is the only
purely classical public examina
tion at Oxford. In 1882 I was
bracketed equal for the Prosser
exhibition at Balliol College in

Philosophy, History and Scholarship: this is the highest distinction obtainable at Balliol and is open to all undergraduate members of the college. In 1884 I was honourably mentioned for the Craven scholarships. These scholarships - two in number - were at that time open to all men of 4.5 & 6 years standing.

From 1884 to Decr 1890 I occupied the position of 2nd master at Sheffield Grammar School, where I had the greatest possible success as a teacher - many of my pupils obtaining marked distinctions. From 1891 to 1895 I was settled in Oxford where for the last 2 years I also held the position of Senior Classical & German master at the military college, Oxford, where I was again very successful. I beg to refer you to the testimonials - enclosed in a separate envelope - of the principals of the above institutions. While I was in Oxford I also had opportunities of largely extending my knowledge of classical and modern literature as well as of history and philology. For two years I took by correspondence

the Greek composition of the highest class at Edinburgh University for Prof. Butcher who speaks very highly of my work in his testimonials.

I offer my services for work in Latin, Greek, German, English (including Anglo Saxon) Philology and Ancient History. My qualifications in Latin and Greek (especially composition) entitle me to place them in a separate class but I consider myself also fully qualified to teach the other subjects named. I have already spent 6 months in Germany and am at present working at Strasbourg University at nearly all of the above subjects: as I propose to remain here till summer I could if desired confine my attention to any one particular subject that might be required. I should be happy also to take a combination of two or more of the above subjects.

I am 35 years of age and unmarried. I am not without experience of University work as I lectured

for one session at Firth College,
Sheffield (Victoria University.)

I forward by the same post in
a separate envelope copies of my
testimonials: if references are re-
quired I may mention Mr. J. L.
Strachen-Davidson M.A. Fellow &
Tutor of Balliol College, Oxford
(at present spending the winter
in Egypt) Mr. P. E. Matheson, Fel-
low & Tutor of New College, Oxford
& Prof Napier of Oxford as well
as my late Head Master Mr. E.
B. Grundy, Military College, Oxford.

In conclusion I may state
that if at first only a subordinate
position were offered I should be
glad to accept it if it promised
to lead to something better.

I am, Sir

Yours obediently

S. B. Slack M.A.
My (permanent) address is
12 Barton Crescent,
Dawlish
Devon,
England